



Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

Richard F. Cortez
County Judge

David L. Fuentes
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Joe M. Flores
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Ellie Torres
Commissioner, Precinct 4

**OFFICE OF
COUNTY JUDGE
RICHARD F. CORTEZ**

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez: "A Tsunami is coming"

EDINBURG – Concerned that residents of Hidalgo County are not taking seriously the emergency shelter-at-home order now in place, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez is asking local law enforcement to step up efforts to enforce the order to keep people home.

"We know there is a tsunami coming," Judge Cortez said in his most forceful language yet. "It hasn't hit us yet. If there is anything we can do to mitigate this it is stronger enforcement on the orders."

Judge Cortez said he is receiving calls from residents and others who want more restrictions in place. "I would recommend even more restrictions when we've reached the level of enforcement with current restrictions that we are comfortable with," Judge Cortez said. "I think we would all agree that traffic may have slowed, but not to the levels we had hoped."

He believes this is an appropriate step in what he believes are the early rounds of a 15-round boxing match. "What we need to do today is educate our people to ask themselves what they consider essential," Judge Cortez said. "We must stop being outside for any reason. Don't risk it," he said. Judge Cortez added that people must learn that they have an obligation to protect themselves.

Unless that happens, he said, the potential to overwhelm our health care system remains a threat. "There is a tipping point when our health care will be overwhelmed. We have to avoid reaching that tipping point."

How? By following the same guidelines that have been set out since the beginning days of the pandemic: stay home; practice good hygiene; and avoid other people. This is particularly true of the residents of Hidalgo County, which suffers a disproportionate rate of diabetes and are therefore a more vulnerable population.

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Hidalgo County is home to one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. We provide health and justice to the over 800,000 residents of our county. We strive to be accessible and responsive to our citizens by providing excellent public service through the values of leadership, transparency, fairness, collaboration, respect and fiscal responsibility. Follow our social media feed at www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/followus